

# INSTALLING CAVE GATES FY2003 REPORT

## Timpanogos Cave National Monument

### Summary

The Timpanogos Cave System is showing a large decline in Townsend's Big-Eared Bat (*Corynorhinus townsendii*) populations. One explanation for the decline is that the natural entrances to the three cave system were improperly gated in 1991. These gates were installed for cave security, not for maintaining the cave ecosystem and bat populations. In FY2002, new gates will be designed and installed to maintain the cave's security, but also to restore the cave's natural airflow, maximize the ease of bat passage, and eliminate the chances of bat predation.

### Progress

This project is near completion with 2 of the 3 gates installed. Hansen Cave gate and Timpanogos Cave gate were installed in early May before the tours started. Due to the late funding pushing into the cave's opening day, the Middle Cave gate was not finished in FY2003. However, the gate is scheduled to be constructed in the spring in 2004.



The old Timpanogos Cave Gate



The new improved Timpanogos Cave Gate

Some increased sightings of Townsend Big-eared bats were seen throughout the year. However, more time is needed to show the effectiveness of the new gates for reestablishing bat populations.



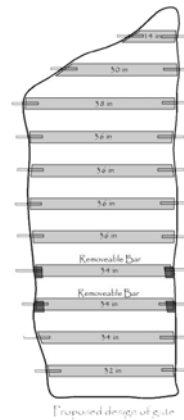
The old Hansen Cave Gate



New Timpanogos Cave Gate



The old Middle Cave Gate



Designs for the new gate

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